

United States District Court Southern District of Florida



Electronic Filing Program User's Manual

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Introduction

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida will now accept electronic filings from a limited class of litigants in civil cases. It is anticipated that the pool of litigants who may file and the cases in which such filings will be accepted will be growing at a steady rate over the next few months. Potential Users are thus urged to check the "E-Filing" section of this Court's website for updates on the program's expansion. The practices, procedures, and rules governing electronic filing in this Court are set out in Administrative Order 2002-36, a copy of which is attached hereto and is available online or at any of the District's five staffed court locations.

Authorization to File

Parties who are otherwise permitted to electronically file documents in this court must first fill out and submit an authorization form, a copy of which is attached hereto and which is also available at any Clerk's Office in the District. The completed form cannot be submitted electronically; the completed and signed hard copy must be sent to the address appearing on the form, or personally presented at any Clerk's Office in the district. It is imperative that all of the information required on the form is supplied completely and accurately, and that the Clerk's Office is notified of any changes in information. Inaccurate information can cause a failure of filing or confirmation of filing. Such failures, and any delay resulting therefrom, are the responsibility of the registrant, and not the Court or the Clerk's Office. It is important to note that confirmation of a successful E-Filing event will be sent to the E-mail address provided on the form; it is thus imperative that that address be current, active, and correct.

Once the completed form is received and processed by the Clerk's Office, the user will be issued a log-in and password. An attorney/user's log-in and password serves as and constitutes the attorney/user's signature for the purposes of this Court's local rules and the Rules of Federal Civil Procedure, including Rule 11. Therefore, attorney/users must protect and secure the password issued by the Court. If there is any reason to suspect that the security of the password has been breached in any way, it is the duty and responsibility of the attorney/user to notify the Court.

Technical Requirements

All documents electronically filed must be in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). Some word processing programs (such as Corel WordPerfect) include a PDF writer component. If your word processing software does not include a PDF writer, you must procure PDF writing software. PDF files look identical to the original documents, and include all the pages and formatting of the originals.

In order to file electronically, you must have an active Internet connection (via a modem, DSL, cable modem, or other connection method) and an Internet Service Provider (such as AOL, Earthlink, At&t, etc).

What May be Filed

The filing of the case-initiating documents in all cases, including those cases in which this Court has, by administrative order, authorized electronic filing, must continue to be accomplished in the traditional manner – i.e., on paper – rather than electronically. This includes the complaint, and the issuance and service of summons.

Subsequent to case opening, all pleadings, motions, documents, etc., in the cases of the identified class deemed appropriate for Electronic Filing may be filed electronically in conformance with the Local Rules and applicable Administrative Orders, except that the following documents may not, until further notice, be electronically filed:

- a) case-initiating documents (*see* § B 2, *supra*)
- b) Single documents exceeding 25 pages in length
- c) emergency matters
- d) documents filed under seal pursuant to Local Rule 5.4
- e) the state court record and other the Rule 5 materials in habeas corpus case under 28 U.S.C. § 2254
- f) administrative records and transcripts in Social Security and other administrative review cases
- g) attachments and/or exhibits to the filed document which exceed, cumulatively, 50 pages in length
- h) handwritten materials
- i) any document which the Court may hereinafter require be filed on paper with original signature

Form, Format, and Rules Governing Filing

All existing Federal Rules of Procedure and Local Rules governing the form, format, and content of pleadings and the timing of filing apply with full force to electronically filed documents, unless the Court specifically excepts the application of any of its local rules. The attached administrative order specifically suspends application of Local Rule 5.1 to electronic filings. Thus, no paper copy of an electronically filed document need be provided to the presiding Judge.

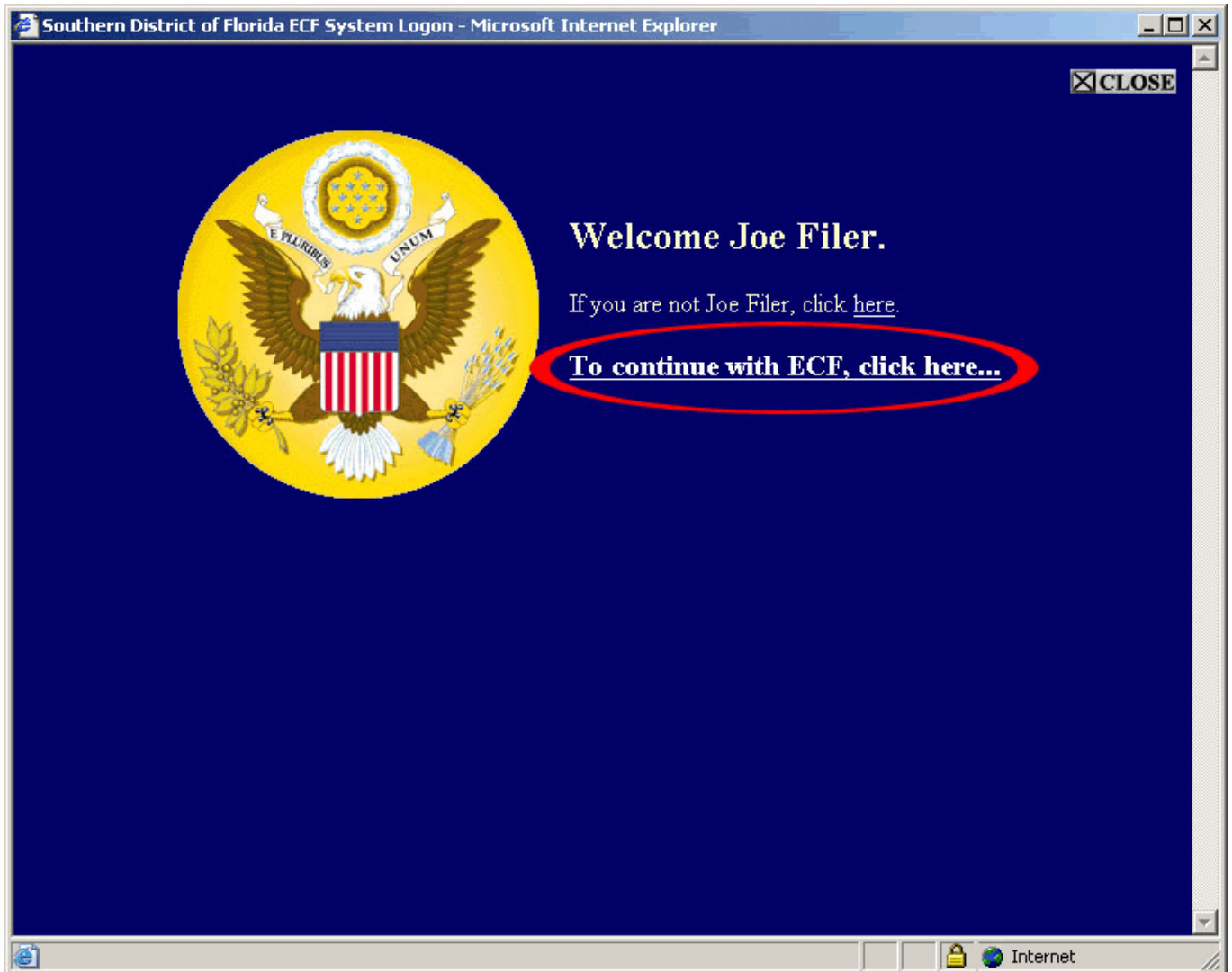
Electronically filed documents must include a signature block, and must set forth the name, address, phone number, fax numbers and E-Mail address of the signor. In addition, the name of the authorized user who electronically filed the document must be typed on the signature line, preceded by an “s/.” Documents requiring multiple signatures must list all other signatories and type their names on the individual signature line, preceded by an “s/.” By submitting such a document, the filer certifies that each of the other signatories has expressly agreed to the form and substance of the document and that the filer has their actual authority to submit the document electronically. The filer must retain any records evidencing the concurrence of the other signatories for subsequent production to the Court if so ordered.

Instructions for Filing

1. Go to our web page at <http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov> and select the link to the E-File system.



2. After a successful login, you will see the following welcome screen displaying your name:



Click on, “To continue with ECF, click here...”, to start filing.


Note: If you click on the **CLOSE** button found in the upper right corner of this page, you will be logged out of the ECF system and the window will be closed. This button is found on other screens in the system and will perform the same action.

4. You will now see the main filing screen, as shown below.

Southern District of Florida ECF System - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Southern District of Florida ECF System

User: Joe Filer
8/30/2002 10:13:03 AM

Case #	YR	CV	Case#
Style:			
Title:			
Main Document - 25pg limit:			Browse...
Exhibits/Attachments - 50 page cumulative limit:			
	#1		Browse...
	#2		Browse...
	#3		Browse...
	#4		Browse...
	#5		Browse...
	#6		Browse...
	#7		Browse...
	#8		Browse...
	#9		Browse...
	#10		Browse...

Submit Reset

5. Enter the Case number (composed of 2-digit year, CV or CR, and up to 5-digit case reference number), Style (e.g., “USA vs. Doe”), and the title of the document you will be filing (e.g. “Motion for Extension of Time to File Response”).
6. To choose the PDF document you are going to file from your computer, click on the “Browse...” button in the row corresponding to the “Main Document” entry. Another window will open, where you may browse your computer to find the document you wish to file. When you find it, select it and click “Open”.

Remember : the main document cannot exceed 25 pages and must be in PDF format.

7. You can specify up to ten (10) exhibits or attachments for the main document you are submitting. Follow the same procedures as for the main document to specify the location of the attachments/exhibits in your computer.

Remember: attachments may not **total** more than 50 pages , and must also be in PDF format.

8. If you are sure that you have correctly followed all of the procedures and identified and attached the correct documents, click the “Submit” button. **Your document(s) will not be filed unless you click the “Submit” button.**

If have done everything correctly and supplied all required information, you will see a confirmation like this:

1 document(s) submitted.

Joe Filer, would you like to file more documents? Yes No

If there are any errors, you will receive an error message, like the one below, explaining what was wrong with the submission.

YOUR DOCUMENT HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED!

The document you are trying to file has 64 pages, surpassing the 25 page limit.
Please submit a document that has a MAXIMUM of 25 pages.

Would you like to try again? Yes No

If you select “No” in any of the above screens, you will be logged out of the ECF system and returned to the login screen.

Help System

If you are unsure about what a button or form field is for, simply place the mouse over that object, and a small yellow window will appear, giving you a brief explanation of its function. Questions, problems, or requests for further information may be E-mailed to “E-File-Admin_FLSD@flsd.uscourts.gov”.

Timing and Confirmation of Filing

Users will have the ability to electronically file at any time. Although electronic filings will be *processed* only during business hours, a successfully uploaded document that sufficiently complies with all relevant rules governing filing will be deemed filed when electronically received, and will be stamped with the date on which the successful upload was completed. A document that is not what the filer has represented it to be, is obviously not intended for filing, or does not substantially comply with applicable rules to be accepted for filing, will be returned unfiled. User error which results in a failure of or delay in filing will not toll the time for filing nor constitute cause to excuse a late filing. Thus, parties who file after business hours on the day a pleading is due do so at their own risk.

When an document is downloaded from the Internet Site, opened by a deputy clerk, and found to be substantially compliant with applicable rules, the PDF document will be electronically stamped “filed” with the date of filing and the initials of the deputy clerk who electronically stamped it. An electronic copy of the stamped PDF file will then be returned to the sender as an acknowledgment of receipt and filing. Unless such return is received, the sender should not assume that the document has been received and filed.

Consequences of Filing

Successful upload of a fileable document in conformance with these rules, memorialized by the return transmission of an electronically-stamped copy of the PDF file as an acknowledgment of receipt of filing, constitutes filing of the document for any and all purposes of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the local rules of this Court.